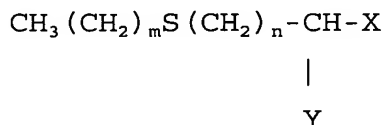


What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for preventing or reducing mucositis in a human or animal patient exposed to radiation, the method comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a protective agent comprising a compound containing a methionine or a methionine-like moiety.

2. A method as set forth in claim 1 wherein the protective agent comprises a compound having the structural formula:



wherein m is an integer from 0 to 3; n is an integer from 1 to 3; X = -OR<sup>1</sup>, -OCOR<sup>1</sup>, -COOR<sup>1</sup>, -CHO, -CH(OR<sup>1</sup>)<sub>2</sub>, or -CH<sub>2</sub>OH; Y = -NR<sup>2</sup>R<sup>3</sup> or -OH; R<sup>1</sup> = H or a substituted or unsubstituted, straight or branched chain alkyl group having 1 to 6 carbon atoms; R<sup>2</sup> = H or a substituted or unsubstituted, straight or branched chain acyl group having 1 to 6 carbon atoms; and R<sup>3</sup> = H or a substituted or unsubstituted, straight or branched chain acyl group having 1 to 6 carbon atoms; or  
a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

3. A method as set forth in claim 2, wherein the protective agent is selected from the group consisting of L-methionine, a mixture of D-methionine and L-methionine, normethionine, homomethionine, methioninol, hydroxy methionine, ethionine, S-adenosyl-L-methionine, a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and a combination thereof.

4. A method as set forth in claim 3, wherein the protective agent is D-methionine.

5. A method as set forth in claim 3, wherein the protective agent is L-methionine.

6. A method as set forth in claim 3, wherein the protective agent is D,L-methionine.

7. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the protective agent is administered prior to said radiation exposure.

8. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the protective agent is administered simultaneously with said radiation exposure.

9. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the protective agent is administered subsequently to said radiation exposure.

10. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the effective amount of the protective agent is administered to said patient in a time period of from about 6 hours before to about 6 hours after the exposure to radiation.

11. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the effective amount of the protective agent is administered to said patient in a time period of from about 1 hour before to about 1 hour after the exposure to radiation.

12. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein the effective amount of the protective agent is administered to said patient in a time period of from about one-half hour

before to about one-half hour after the exposure to radiation.

13. A method as set forth in claim 1, wherein effective amount of the protective agent is administered to said patient orally, parenterally or topically, and the administration of said effective amount of protective agent results in a blood serum level equivalent to that achieved by parenteral administration in the range of from about 1.0 mg/kg body weight to about 600 mg/kg body weight.

14. A method as set forth in claim 13, wherein the administration of said effective amount of the protective agent results in a blood serum level equivalent to that achieved by parenteral administration in the range of from about 5 mg/kg body weight to about 500 mg/kg body weight.

15. A method as set forth in claim 13, wherein the administration of said effective amount of the protective agent results in a blood serum level equivalent to that achieved by parenteral administration in the range of from about 10 mg/kg body weight to about 400 mg/kg body weight.

16. A method as set forth in claim 1, further comprising administering to said patient a supplemental amount of the protective agent after the administration of said effective amount.

17. A method as set forth in claim 16, wherein said supplemental amount of the protective agent is administered orally, parenterally, or topically to said patient.

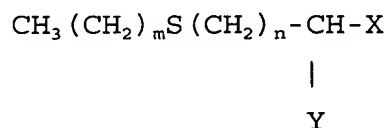
18. A method as set forth in claim 17, wherein the administration of said supplemental amount of the protective

agent is sufficient to maintain a blood serum level of protective agent within said patient of at least about 10% of the blood serum level achieved by administration of the effective amount of the protective agent.

19. A method as set forth in claim 18, wherein the administration of said supplemental amount of the protective agent is sufficient to maintain a blood serum level of protective agent within said patient of from about 20% to about 70% of the blood serum level achieved by administration of the effective amount of the protective agent.

20. A method for preventing or reducing mucositis in a human or animal patient undergoing treatment with a chemotherapeutic effective amount of an anti-tumor platinum-coordination compound, the method comprising administering to said patient an effective amount of a protective agent comprising a compound containing a methionine or a methionine-like moiety.

21. A method as set forth in claim 20 wherein the protective agent comprises a compound having the structural formula:



wherein m is an integer from 0 to 3; n is an integer from 1 to 3; X = -OR<sup>1</sup>, -OCOR<sup>1</sup>, -COOR<sup>1</sup>, -CHO, -CH(OR<sup>1</sup>)<sub>2</sub>, or -CH<sub>2</sub>OH; Y = -NR<sup>2</sup>R<sup>3</sup> or -OH; R<sup>1</sup> = H or a substituted or unsubstituted, straight or branched chain alkyl group having 1 to 6 carbon atoms; R<sup>2</sup> = H or a substituted or unsubstituted, straight or branched chain acyl group having 1 to 6 carbon atoms; and R<sup>3</sup> = H or a substituted or

unsubstituted, straight or branched chain acyl group having  
1 to 6 carbon atoms; or  
a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

22. A method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the  
protective agent is selected from the group consisting of L-  
methionine, a mixture of D-methionine and L-methionine,  
normethionine, homomethionine, methioninol, hydroxy  
methionine, ethionine, S-adenosyl-L-methionine, a  
pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, and a combination  
thereof.

23. A method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the  
protective agent is administered prior to the administration  
of said chemotherapeutic effective amount of anti-tumor  
platinum-coordination compound.

24. A method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the  
protective agent is administered simultaneously with the  
administration of said chemotherapeutic effective amount of  
anti-tumor platinum-coordination compound.

25. A method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the  
protective agent is administered subsequently to the  
administration of said chemotherapeutic effective amount of  
anti-tumor platinum-coordination compound.

26. A method as set forth in claim 20, wherein the  
protective agent is administered orally, parenterally or  
topically to said patient, and the administration of said  
effective amount of the protective agent results in a blood  
serum level equivalent to that achieved by parenteral  
administration in the range of from about 1.0 mg/kg body  
weight to about 600 mg/kg body weight.

27. A method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the administration of said effective amount of the protective agent results in a blood serum level equivalent to that achieved by parenteral administration in the range of from about 5 mg/kg body weight to about 500 mg/kg body weight.

28. A method as set forth in claim 26, wherein the administration of said effective amount of the protective agent results in a blood serum level equivalent to that achieved by parenteral administration in the range of from about 10 mg/kg body weight to about 400 mg/kg body weight.

29. A method as set forth in claim 20, further comprising administering to said patient a supplemental amount of the protective agent after the administration of said effective amount.

30. A method as set forth in claim 29, wherein said supplemental amount of the protective agent is administered orally, parenterally, or topically to said patient.

31. A method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the administration of said supplemental amount of the protective agent is sufficient to maintain a blood serum level of protective agent within said patient of at least about 10% of the blood serum level achieved by administration of the effective amount of the protective agent.

32. A method as set forth in claim 30, wherein the administration of said supplemental amount of the protective agent is sufficient to maintain a blood serum level of protective agent within said patient of from about 20% to about 70% of the blood serum level achieved by

administration of the effective amount of the protective agent.